M 243 The cultivation of rice serves less to nourish the native than for trade. He usually sells his harvest immediately after the husking.

T M 244 Peanuts thrive in the region of the Banfumu and among the Bankutshu. They grow best in light soil and are not suitable for land cleared from the great forest. The crop demands a great deal of care and regular upkeep. Fields invaded by weeds yield nothing. The harvest takes place when the crop is mature and is the task of the women with the help of the children. The peanuts are placed in baskets carried on the back and taken to the village. The native spreads them out in the sun to dry. He turns them again and again, two or three times a day, and brings them into the hut at night.

T M [462]

M 249 Sugar-cane plantations are set up in marshy lowlands.

[462] All the work on this crop falls to the men. These plantations are found only in regions where the natives make masanga, sugar-cane beer. Sugar-cane fields are especially numerous in the villages on the lower Lukenie and the Fimi.

[273]

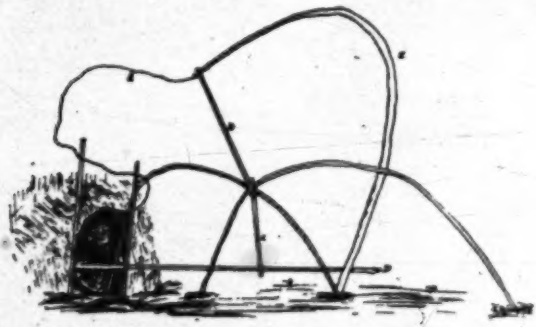
M 244 As a rule the natives also cultivate a few legumes, sweet potatoes, and yams, but on a small scale and without giving them any particular care. [61]

Hunting

M 224 462 Hunting is practiced only by men. They engage in it, not for sport, diversion, or relaxation, but for the sole purpose of procuring meat and fat.

M 224 851 From their earliest childhood, the boys get together to beat the grass and catch mice, rats, and other rodents which swarm in the bush. Nothing is more interesting than to see them at work. Ten, fifteen, or sometimes twenty of them form a large circle. Armed with sticks, they beat the grass and make an unbelievable din. Little by little the circle narrows, moving in on a small well-cleared space. The oldest, most daring and most agile of the boys keep watch over this space, their eyes alert and riveted on the edge of the grass, ready to pounce. The beaters redouble their zeal, strike, shout, gesture, and gradually drive all the rodents

toward the small clearing. Badgered and frightened, the rats, mice, etc., run madly. Not daring to break through the line of beaters, they are pushed toward the clearing, hesitate an instant before entering it, then bound in. Without moving from their places, the little hunters wait for them and catch them in passing.



A sharp, quick blow and their ribs are smashed in, their skulls broken. Not one escapes; neither their size (some rodents are as big as hares) nor bites nor scratches frighten these tots of three, four, or five years of age.

The children also occupy themselves by capturing birds and small rodents with nets and snares. The latter are made with a flexible stalk for a spring and a cord with a noose. A system of small sticks which automatically trigger the release compels the bird to stick its head into the noose to reach the bait. At this moment, the mechanism is released, and the victim is pulled up by the cord attached to the stalk spring.

The natives also set snares of the same sort in front of holes of rodents and other animals or at a place where they habitually pass.

At the village of Madjuku, I had occasion to see the mechanism of a rat snare in action. In front of a hole, two arched sticks [62] intersect. A strong rattan stalk (E) has been stuck into the ground, and two piassava cords (A and B) are tied to its tip. One of the cords ends in a noose, which is placed in front of the entrance to the hole. A small stick (C) is attached to the end of the second cord. One of the ends of this stick passes behind the intersection

264 spherical calotte, and also wooden plates. Sometimes also simple leaves are used as plates, unless the food is served in the cooking pots.

The whole meal is spread on the ground. [144]

The man squats on his mat and dips leisurely in the dishes with his hand, moving from one to another according to his taste.

The meal is always eaten in silence. Even when several friends eat together, they never talk during the meal.

After the meal the natives carefully wash their hands and teeth and rinse out their mouths several times.

Beverages

271 415 Water is the only beverage they drink at mealtime, and they use it quite rarely. If they do not have a wooden or earthenware cup, they use part of a calabash or simply a leaf rolled into a little cone.

Fig. 83. Water Carrier.

312 462 857 482 Water usually comes from a spring near the village. The natives use river water only when it is quite clear. The women and children have the task of fetching water, a chore which is often quite hard. I visited many villages located along or near the river, whose source of drinking water was 20 to 30 minutes away.

At certain hours of the day and more especially in the morning as the sun first comes up, the women and children set out, a calabash or water jug balanced on their heads, to fetch the supply for the day.

271 415 Water is kept in large calabashes or earthenware jugs, sheltered from the sun in a corner of the hut.

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[857]

D. Against the go-between (1) Nkundɔ̆ law permits all sorts

> 1. The Nkundɔ̆ generally use go-betweens to tender invitations to women; these are frequently children between the ages of six and fourteen. The disastrous effect of such a practice on the bringing up of young people is easily understood. In some groups it has inflicted a real moral evil.

of invective, blows, and a good whipping. Formerly the most serious situation arose if a woman was called directly. In the past, if favored by circumstances (especially the social position of the families involved), certain of the more jealous and bold men caught the go-between and sold him as a slave. This punishment was entirely legitimate, even though the person for whom the go-between acted was the one primarily guilty and therefore the prisoner's family could attack him on that account. People cite the rather recent historic case of Bonkɛ̆kɛ̆ is'Iloko of Ikengo (Ntɔ̆mbɛ̆, Wɛ̆ngatɛ̆), who sold a Botswa named Bompɛ̆te into slavery because the latter had brought a lover's gift to Wɛ̆fya, his favorite.

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E. Conclusion. In examining the various sanctions that Nkundɔ̆ law provides against adulterers and their accomplices, we are struck by a noticeable difference among the cases. Although a wife has certain means to check her husband's misconduct, she is unquestionably less well armed than he. This is a logical consequence of the nature of Nkundɔ̆ marriage. A husband defends his "property," whereas a wife is not an "owner." Furthermore, in this realm the requirements are stricter for a woman than for a man. Even in Europe the misconduct of a man is judged very differently than a woman's weakness, the latter being considered much more serious and shameful, even though -- in an absolute sense -- the two are equal. Finally, the system of polygamy plays a role, for it tends to weaken a wife's love and consequently her jealousy, so

845 puberty, by his father. The performance of this role entails continence (bokeka) for the person who undertakes it, even with respect to the spouse. A violation of this rule prevents healing of the wound or at least makes the process very long and difficult. (1)

[755] 1. A similar bokeka applies to anyone nursing a large gangrenous ulcer (wǎlé).

The foreskin that has been cut off is dried on the bolíkó (tray or shelf). Then no one bothers with it any longer, and it usually remains there, dusty and dirty, for an indefinite period of time if the rats leave it alone.

In the centers the young people are beginning to neglect [177] the native skilled in circumcising and resort instead to European surgeons.

Circumcision is not an occasion for feasts or ceremonies. [556] Sometimes a man who is rich and vain will give a feast, but this is not at all a common practice.

The term "to circumcise" is translated in Lonkundo as téna bonsoé, "to cut off the foreskin." The less vulgar term and one used much more frequently is téna nsóngé, "to cut off the tip." A much too decent circumlocution is téna batói, "to cut off the ears."

The reason for this custom has already been given in Chapter I, Part II, Article II, 2.

Article VIII. Education

868 From an early age a Nkundó child must perform various small services for his parents, especially in the household; he is 857 asked to draw water, fetch firewood, take care of a little brother or sister, etc. The demands for such services are addressed chiefly to girls, but boys are not at all exempt. By the very nature of things, however, the latter are less frequently asked to help.

Quite early a boy may accompany his father on trips, at meetings, legal debates, etc The father makes a bow and arrows for him and teaches him the art of using them. The great pastime

857 for young boys is hunting and fishing by all sorts of methods suitable
868 for their age. Little by little an adolescent learns the usual tasks and everything that he needs to know in order to survive and obtain food and shelter. His instruction is completed by his companions and above all by the exigencies of life.

A girl learns housework and farming. Very early her mother braids a small basket for her in order to accustom her to carrying loads. She also participates in the women's fishing.

In general one has the impression that the girls are far more active than the boys. But I think that this difference is due to the fact that the boys are almost always in the forest, while the girls remain in the village and are therefore noticed more. As a matter of fact in our missions it cannot be said that the boys work less well than the girls, quite the contrary.

The girls practice the culinary art, not only with their mothers but also -- as in Belgium -- in a game (ioto).

The children do not study the history, laws, and traditions
867 of their clan or tribe. They learn them in the [508] course of
869 events, either by hearing them described or by asking questions. Often their parents explain such matters on their own initiative, not according to a definite program but rather when opportunities arise. A young man can learn many things especially by accompanying his father on visits, on trips, at meetings and deliberations, or by listening attentively to the performances of troubadours who play the longombé (mandolin). The astonishing knowledge of usages and customs, ancestral laws, history, the wisdom of the ancients, proverbs, fables, etc., possessed by some youngsters, to the point of excelling their elders, can be explained by their faithfulness in following papa instead of continuously enjoying the freedom of the forest. I have encountered more than one instance of this sort which was explained primarily on the basis of the boy's attachment to his father.

The Nkundó child begins to hum popular tunes and imitate
868 the rhythmic movements of the dancers when he is barely able to walk. Little girls, especially, practice special dances of their own. Then, little by little, the children mix with the group of adult dancers and are able to join the chorus, though they must remain in the rear.